Language in the Interview Setting: The Effect of Powerful and Powerless Language on Gender Role Interpretation

An Honors Thesis (PSYS 499)

By

Hanna E. Hlebasko

Thesis Advisor

Thomas Holtgraves

Signed

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

May 2015

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2015

Abstract

The glass ceiling is a pressing issue for women in the workplace, meaning women are not advancing into management positions at the same rate as men. A potential cause can be derived from Role Congruency Theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) which states that agentic women who do not adhere to communal stereotypes are viewed as less competent for leadership positions. An example of agentic behavior is the use of powerful, direct language. Research suggests that women use indirect language more often than men (Carlie, 1990). While competent candidates often use powerful language in interviews, women who use powerful language could violate their gender roles and be perceived as incompetent for the job. The current research assessed how 108 participants recruited from introductory psychology, social media, and campus email evaluated candidates based on gender and the use of powerful or powerless language. While there was no gender by language interaction, a main effect for language indicated that those who used powerless language scored less on competency, hireability, and agentic traits.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Thomas Holtgraves for providing advice as I created my undergraduate thesis. I would also like to thank those in the Psychological Science Department Honors course for providing me with excellent feedback as we traversed this daunting project.

Language Use in the Interview Setting: The Effect of Powerful and Powerless Language on Gender Role Interpretation

Extensive literature exists on how genders are perceived differently in the workplace. These differences can be profound when women attempt to advance their careers into upper management (Gorman, 2005). In fact, women often encounter the glass ceiling, an invisible barrier that prevents women from advancing to high management positions. Communication and language are vital to organizational functioning. However, an issue arises when language is perceived differently as a function of speaker gender. The literature in both linguistics and management point to a bind women face in the workplace: she can be strong, assertive and advance her career but be disliked by her peers. On the other hand, she can be soft, indirect and liked by her peers but be unable to advance her career. This double bind makes it difficult for women to advance their careers because they need to simultaneously portray both masculine and feminine traits. Role Congruency Theory and linguistic literature suggest that men and women use language differently, which would make the bind that women face particularly salient in an interview setting.

Role Congruency Theory

An extension of Social Role Theory is Role Congruency Theory: Gender roles affect the way people evaluate each other. Descriptive norms are applied to genders to dictate their ideal social roles. According to Role Congruity Theory, there are two forms of prejudice women encounter (Eagly & Karau, 2002). First, women are perceived to have less favorable evaluation of leadership potential than men, which can be caused by the fact leadership roles are often described as masculine, and women are seen to embody feminine traits. Therefore, there is an incongruity in ability based on these stereotypes. Second, women's actual behaviors in

leadership roles are evaluated as less favorable and less effective than men. This stems from descriptive gender roles. Women's gender roles should be nurturing, caring, and interdependent; men should be self-sufficient, dominant, and independent. Social Role Theory descries women as communal since they are historically more likely to fulfill a caretaker role. On the other hand, the theory portrays men historically as breadwinners (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Incongruence arises since many leadership roles are defined with agentic traits; therefore women are not perceived or evaluated to be effective when assuming leadership positions. Even when women act in a communal manner, they do not demonstrate the agentic traits assigned to assertive leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). When women present themselves in a communal manner, such as being supportive and taking advice, women will not be evaluated or perceived as successful leaders because they are not acting independently, such as giving directives and exerting status. When women act with agentic traits they are perceived to lack the social skills ascribed to women's gender role, therefore they are not seen to be effective leaders because they are not adhering to the communal gender role (Phelan, Moss-Rascuin, & Rudman, 2008).

These differences are prominent when assessing power. Okimoto and Brescoll (2010) investigated how female politicians were perceived when pursuing power in political offices. Participants evaluated political candidates who were either male or female, and whose campaign depicted them as power or non-power seeking. The power seeking female brought out feelings of negative emotional reactions because of perceived lack of communal traits. This difference only applied to women and not to non-power seeking males.

Backlash effect. A further application of Role Congruity Theory in the workplace is the backlash effect. The backlash effect is when women are evaluated differently if they present

themselves as agentic rather than communal (Phelan et al., 2008; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Rudman (1998) researched the backlash effect in impression management styles. Confederates presented themselves in a self-promoting (agentic) or self-effacing (communal) manner in an interview. Self-promoting confederates presented themselves as prideful, boasting about their strengths and citing these achievements from internal drives. Self-effacing confederates, on the other hand, were more indirect and humble about their skills, citing achievements from external and internal drives. Participants were asked to evaluate the confederates in various interview settings. The results indicated that women had to present themselves with more agentic attributes than men in order to be viewed as equally hirable. Furthermore, female participants found the self-promoting woman less competent and less socially attractive than the self-promoting man. The female participants simply favored the self-promoting man over the self-promoting woman. These results demonstrate the prevalence of gender roles: female participants were more likely to hold each other to gender roles than male participants. Enforcing gender roles is more than men vying for power in the workplace, but addressing cultural gender roles (Rudman, 1998).

Phelan et al. (2008) found that participants viewed job qualifications differently for agentic men and women. Specifically, agentic women were perceived as competent for a job; however, they were rated as less hirable because of a lack of social skills. Agentic men, however, were rated as possessing competency and social skills, and were therefore more hirable. Agentic men and women were evaluated according to different standards since participants saw the agentic women lacking communal traits. This is unique because communal men did not suffer from the same effect. Men who presented themselves in a communal manner were not punished

for their role incongruence. This implies that leadership positions are ascribed to men, not necessarily masculinity. Women who present themselves as being masculine are seen to lack social traits even though agentic men are not described as missing these traits.

The commonality in the research is that men and women are perceived to uphold certain gender roles. When women violate these roles, others perceive them as lacking the qualifications and skills needed to perform a job competently or have social skills. Another way these differences can be interpreted is through communication styles which mimic these traits.

Gender Differences in Language

Generally speaking, men and women use language differently (Edwards, 2013). For example, the perception of differences include the use of politeness, concern with status, standard speech patterns, swearing, over and understatements, and tag questions. While it could be easy to jump to gender role differences, it is important to understand how language is perceived. Feminist linguistics are concerned that language interpretation is done from a predominately male perspective. For example, indirect language, or powerless language, is often seen as being less persuasive that direct language, or powerful language, and therefore avoided. However, research has shown this indirect language can be effective when used by women in the workplace (Mills, 2012). Essentially, indirect language can be used by women to accomplish objectives even though it is not specifically direct.

Powerful and powerless language. Powerful language is used to exert and persuade others to meet a goal or a desired outcome (Ng & Bradac, 1993). The concept of powerful language is important for management positions as orders and directives are issued on a regular basis. On the other hand, powerless language includes hedges, tag questions, disclaimers, hesitations, and more (Carli, 1990; Blankenship & Holtgraves, 2006; Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999;

Hosman & Siltanen, 2006). While this language is used to be persuasive, it is indirect. Kendall and Tannen (1997) assessed literature on how men and women approach discourse in the workplace. While women take less floor time, use fewer interruptions, and deemphasize their status, they use these to convey power in the workplace even though they are not using powerful language. Kendall and Tannen (1997) noted that there was a shift in the characteristics of managers to include feminine traits rather than being a masculine role. However, women still face the double bind. Women who use powerful language will complete objectives but be less favorable. If they use powerless language they will be liked but not seen as competent.

The literature presents inconclusive results on how men and women use powerful and powerless language differently. Carli (1990) indicated that women were more likely to use powerless language and be more persuasive with men because of their lower status. Women in same-sex interactions were more likely to use intensifiers and verbal reinforces - in other words powerful language. Other research has indicated no significant difference in the way genders use powerful or powerless language. However, this difference is not robust, and the actual difference in language communication could actually be small (Blankenship & Holtgraves, 2006; Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999).

Powerful and powerless language are interpreted differently, making the use of them important (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006). Powerful language was perceived, to some extent, to demonstrate competence, status, and dynamisms (which reflect agentic traits). On the other hand, powerless language is perceived as less assertive, competent, credible, authoritative, (which reflect communal traits) and in general is evaluated less favorably than someone who uses powerful language, regardless of gender (Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999). Furthermore, participants were more likely to remember powerless utterances as more powerless when spoken by a woman

than the same utterances made by men. Messages with hedges (e.g. *I somewhat liked the toy*) were evaluated as lower in intellectual competence while intensifiers (e.g. *I really hated the toy*) were perceived as exhibiting the greatest control of the self and others (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006, p. 42). This could be caused by the fact that these powerless markers distract the observer from the overall message (Blankenship & Holtgraves, 2006).

Reid, Palomares, Anderson, and Bondad-Brown (2009) assessed how effectively expectation states, role congruity, and self-categorization theories predicted participant interpretation of males and females using powerful and powerless language. According to Role Congruity Theory, women can use powerless language to be influential when interacting with men. The results indicated that the participants viewed the powerful (either man or woman) speaker as more agentic than communal. However, this was taken into account for speaker style if the speaker was perceived to be high in agency. Furthermore, the powerless speaker was also perceived to be high in communality. Role Congruity Theory was effective at predicting the difference in language when gender was the salient factor, but this effect disappeared when the salient factor was shifted to college education.

While this research on the influence of powerful and powerless language is shown in laboratory settings, the applied setting shows a different story. Women use powerless and polite forms of language to be effective in management positions. For example, Japanese women use indirect and polite forms of language to be persuasive and effective in the workplace with male counterparts (Takano, 2005). Business women in the UK fall into Kanter's role traps when working in a male-dominated workplace. These role traps are characterized by historical stereotypes, which include mother, seductress, pet, and iron maiden. While these roles restrain women from acting outside of communal stereotypes, Baxter (2012) found that women were still

effective. Even though these women adapted to these role traps, they were able to accomplish the same directives without using the same language as men.

Politeness theory. Politeness theories assess the linguistic properties of language to achieve a goal or task. The most researched theory is the Brown and Levinson theory of politeness. While this theory addresses different forms of polite language, it can be described as too simplistic and lacking cultural differences (Mdoudjeke, 2010; Schlund, 2014). The use of powerless language is a method of being indirect. It is important to note that both powerless and polite language are used in situations in which there is a perceived face threatening act, meaning there is the potential for hurting or blaming themselves or the listener for a negative action. This research focuses on the Brown and Levinson theory of politeness as individuals use both positive and negative forms of polite language in situations when power is perceived to be different (Harris, 2003).

Brown and Levinson theory. Harris (2003) assessed linguistic politeness in three institutional settings: a police station, a doctor's office, and a court. The power feature in Brown and Levinson's formula for politeness was being assessed. The research indicated that while there are clearly defined power differences in the workplace, some individuals choose not to use powerful language until absolutely necessary in order to save face of the hearer. Polite language is used by women in the workplace to be persuasive and effective, such as using humor and small talk (Mullany, 2004; 2006). This indirect form of language reduces the face threatening act of giving a directive.

Other approaches to politeness theory. While the Brown and Levison theory is the most researched politeness theory, there are some limitations (Christie, 2007). Community of practice approach to politeness, often discussed by feminist linguists, argues that powerless language can

be just as effective as powerful language when the context of the situation is taken into account (Mullany, 2004; 2006). This theory focuses on specific situation where language is used. The extent of this research is to show that powerless language does not always lack persuasion power when used in specific situations, an aspect overlooked by the Brown and Levinson theory. Therefore, when assessing language use in the interview setting, the use of powerful and powerless language could have different effects than previously researched. While the research is inconclusive on the effects of powerful versus powerless language in terms of gender differences, Role Congruity Theory would suggests that women using powerless language would be more persuasive because it mimics communal language.

Hypothesis

The purpose of this study was to see if the linguistic markers of powerful and powerless language can contribute to the perception of agentic and communal traits in interview candidates.

1. Agentic trait ratings should be higher in the powerful language condition than communal traits in the powerful language condition and agentic trait ratings in the powerless language condition. In addition, communal trait ratings should be higher in the powerless language condition than agentic traits in the powerless language condition and communal traits in the powerful language condition.
2. Men will be evaluated as more competent and hirable than women, regardless of language used.
3. Women who use powerless language will receive higher scores on the social skills index than women who use powerful language while men will not be given different scores on social skills.

4. Women who use powerful language will receive higher scores on competency than women who use powerless language while men will receive high scores overall regardless of language.
5. Women who use powerful language will receive higher scores on competency and lower scores on socials skill compared to women who use powerless language, who will receive higher scores on social skills and lower scores on competency, as seen in the back lash effect (Phelan et al., 2008).

Method

Participants

A total of 165 participants were recruited from Introduction to Psychology research pool (n = 28), social media (Facebook and Reddit) (n = 66), and campus email (n = 14). Attrition rates were high, with 108 participants completing the actual survey. Two participants were excluded for missing data. Participant age ranged from 18 to 66 (M = 27.97, SD = 12.069). The majority of participants have or are completing a bachelor degree (n = 87), the minority included high school diploma (n = 4), associate degree (n = 6), and master's degree or equivalent (n = 10). The majority of participants identified as white (n = 92), followed by black or African American (n = 6), Asian/Pacific Islander (n = 4), Hispanic/ Latino (n = 3), or other (n = 3). The majority of participants were female (n = 69).

Those recruited from introductory psychology students were given the opportunity to complete an alternative assignment if they did not wish to participate in research. These participants received a half hour credit for participation. Participants recruited through social media and campus email were voluntary only. Each participant was placed in one of four conditions in a 2 (Candidate Gender) X 2 (Language of Transcript) between-subject design.

Materials

Job description and benefits. A job description of the Resident Hall Director was created from the job description found on O*NET for Residential Advisors (O*Net Online, 2011). Job benefits were an accumulation of benefits found on college job postings, including Ball State University (2014) and University of Michigan (2014). See Appendix A for the job description used in the study.

Resume. Two resumes were created to provide participants with the notation that the candidates were qualified for the position. Resumes were identical except for the name and applicable pronouns. Resume items were based on the job requirements for several job postings and information from the O*NET (2014) job listing for Resident Advisor. See Appendix B for the resumes.

Scripts. Two scripts addressed six identical questions addressing agentic aspects and communal aspects of the job. An agentic example question was "*How would you handle a Resident Assistant who was caught drinking in the resident halls*?" and a communal example question was "*How would you handle a conflict between roommates*?" The powerless transcript included one to two powerless markers per questions, totaling four hesitations and nine hedges. The two scripts answered the questions with the same content and only differed on the presence of powerless markers. See Appendix C for the transcripts.

Questionnaire. After reading the job description, participants filled out a questionnaire which consists of five scales: competence index, social skills index, hirability index, and agentic traits and communal traits explanation. The competence index, social skills index, and hireability index, were modified from Phelan et al. (2008). Questions were modified by rewording questions to reference the candidates and to use a 5 – point Likert scale. These scales were used to assess the perception of agentic and communal traits in candidates. Trait

explanation also included open ended questions to allow participants to explain why they rated the applicant as possessing the traits. See Appendix D for the questions asked.

Competence index. Items on this scale asked participants to evaluate the overall competence of the candidate by answering three items on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A higher score indicated a greater perceived competence (α = .83). Items included, "*The candidate strikes you as competent*," "*The candidate has significant technical skills for this job*," and "*You characterize the candidate as someone likely to get ahead in their career*."

Social skills index. Items on this scale asked participants to evaluate the overall social skills the candidate was perceived to have (Phelan et al., 2008). Four items were asked, examples include "*You characterize this candidate as someone you want to get to know better*," and "*The candidate strikes you as likeable*." Higher scores indicated greater social skills on a 5 – point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*) (α = .85).

Hireability index. Items on this scale asked participants to assess the hirability of the candidate w (α = .93). Three items on this scale were: "*You would choose to interview the candidate for the job*," "*The candidate will be hired for the job*," and "*You would hire the candidate*." Items were evaluated on a 5 - point scale from a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) (Phelan et al., 2008).

Trait explanation. In addition to the previous scales, participants evaluated the representation of five agentic traits (*assertive, confident, ambitious, dominant,* and *independent*) and five communal traits (*affection, helpful, kind, sympathetic,* and *nurturing*) on a 5- point Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Participants

were then asked to explain why they thought the candidate represented these traits in an open ended response.

Procedure

Participants were directed to a Qualtrics link to maintain anonymity with a brief request to complete the survey (See Appendix E). From there, they read the informed consent (See Appendix F) and study description (See Appendix G). Then participants read the job description and one of two resumes. Resumes varied by gender only. Then participants read one of the two interview transcripts which varied on the use of powerful or powerless language. Participants then completed the 20-item survey. Afterwards, participants were debriefed to inform them that they were evaluating the agentic and communal traits the applicants were perceived to have based on gender and language usage (See Appendix H). An additional note informed introductory psychology students participants that they should receive credit in a certain time frame and contact information if there were are any issues.

Results

Measurements

Competency index. The competency index was created by averaging the three competency items (candidate showed: *competent, technical skill, career orientated*) ($\alpha = .861$). The average scores were not normally distributed as skew was negative (-1.15) and kurtosis was positive (3.48). However, since all other scales were close to normal distribution it is in the best interest of interpretation to not transform these data. Participants recruited from introductory psychology courses ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.57$), social media ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.83$), and campus email ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.48$) did not rate the candidates significantly different, $F(2, 103) = 2.817$, $p > .05$.

Social skills index. The social skills index was created by averaging the four social skill items (candidate showed: *interesting, listener, likeable, amiable*) together ($\alpha = .839$). The different samples gave significantly different social skill ratings than any other scale. The average scores were within reason of normal distribution, as skew (-.51) and kurtosis (1.54) were low. Participants recruited from Introductory psychology students ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.63$), social media ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.68$), and campus email ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.66$) did respond to questions significantly different, $F\ (2, 103) = 4.03$, $p < .05$, partial eta squared = .073. Bonferroni post hoc indicated a significant difference in social skills ratings between those recruited from social media and the campus email ($p < .05$). There were no difference between those recruited from introductory psychology students and social media ($p > .05$) and introductory psychology students and campus email ($p > .05$).

Hireability index. The hireability index was created by averaging the three hirability items (*participant would want to interview them, the candidate will be hired, participant would hire them*) together ($\alpha = .864$). The average scores were normally distributed with low skew (-.39) and low kurtosis (-.27). Participants recruited from Introductory psychology students ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.93$), Social Media ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.80$), and campus email ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.64$) did not rate the candidates significantly different, $F\ (2, 103) = .525$, $p > .05$.

Agentic Traits. Agentic traits were measured by averaging how much the participant agreed the candidate possessed the traits (*assertive, confident, ambitious, dominant, independent*) ($\alpha = .864$). These scores were normally distributed with low skew (-.550) and low kurtosis (.498). Participants recruited from Introductory psychology students ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.73$), social media ($M = 3.33$, $SD = .85$), and campus email ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 0.51$) did not rate the candidates significantly different, $F\ (2, 103) = 1.809$, $p > .05$.

Communal Traits. Communal traits were measured by averaging how much the participant agreed the candidate possessed the traits (*affection, helpful, kind, sympathetic, nurturing*) ($\alpha = .901$). These scores were normally distributed with low skew (-.115) and low kurtosis (.452). Participants recruited from Introductory psychology students ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.62$), Social Media ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.66$), and campus email ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.61$) did not rate the candidates significantly different, $F(2, 103) = 1.751$, $p > .05$.

Hypothesis Testing

Language and agency. Agentic traits and communal traits were analyzed with a 2 (powerful or powerless language) X 2 (male or female candidate) X 2 (agentic traits and communal traits) mixed model Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with repeated measures on the last variable to test hypothesis one. This analysis was completed to test the effects of language on agency because it was a unique analysis. There was no significant interaction between agency, gender, and language, $F(2, 102) = .211$, $p > .05$. There was no significant interaction between agency and gender, $F(2, 102) = 1.47$, $p > .05$. There was a significant interaction between agency and language, $F(2, 102) = 18.33$, $p < .05$.

Two Bonferroni *t* test a priori contrast tests were used to test the hypothesis that powerful language would elicit more agentic traits than communal and that powerless language would elicit more communal traits than agentic traits. The first test indicated that participants gave the candidate higher ratings for agentic traits in the powerful languages condition ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .59$) than for communal traits in the powerful language condition ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .71$) and agentic traits in the powerless language trails ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .83$), $t(104, 2) = 8.28$, $p < .05$. The second test indicated that participants did not give the candidate higher ratings for communal traits in the powerless language condition ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .71$) than agentic traits in

powerless language condition ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .83$) and communal traits in the powerful language condition ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .60$), $t(104, 2) = 2.02$, $p > .05$ (See Table 1).

Individual scale analysis. Two-way factorial ANOVAs were conducted on the competency, social skills, and hireability indices to evaluate hypothesis two, three ,and four. When the indices were analyzed separately, there was no significant interaction between language and gender on competency (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$), social skills (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$), and hireability (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$). There was no significant main effect for gender on competency (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$), social skills (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$), and hireability (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$).

There was a significant main effect for language on competency (F (2, 106) = 7.681, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .07$) and hireability (F (2, 106) = 11.003, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$), but not on social skills (F (2, 102) = 1.47, $p > .05$). The main effect indicated that those who used powerful language were evaluated higher on the competency index and hireability index than those who used powerless language (See Table 2).

Gender differences in indices. A 2 (Powerful or Powerless Language) X 2 (Social Skills and Competency) mixed model ANOVA with repeated measures on the last variable was conducted, which was divided between the female candidates and the male candidates. This was used to test hypothesis five. There was no significant interaction between language used and scores for female candidates ($F(1, 52) = 2.218$, $p > .05$). In addition, there were no significant differences in ratings between social skills and competency for female candidates $F(1, 52) = 3.44$, $p > .05$). For the male candidates, there was no significant interaction between language used and scores ($F(1, 50) = .17$, $p > .05$). However, there was a significant difference between the scores on the male candidates as the male candidate were rated overall as more competent ($M =$

4.08, $SD = .57$) than having social skills ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .62$) regardless of language used ($F(1, 50) = 20.043$ $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .29$).

Exploratory Analyses

Open response. The survey included two open response questions which asked participants to explain why they rated the applicant as either having or lacking the listed agentic and communal traits. Since there was a main effect for language, responses were analyzed by language. Of the 108 participants who completed the study, 89 participants left informative comments. Participants were omitted if the comments were left blank or if the comments were off topic (Examples include: "*All statements were very matter of fact. Nothing really stood out about their personality. However, this IS an interview, not Miss America*" or "*no idea*"). Further, only 44 participants completed comments for the powerful language trials and 45 participants completed the comments for powerless language trials.

Comments were analyzed by reviewing the entirety of the comments and three themes arose: use of correct gender pronouns, attribution of traits, and prevalence of traits. These themes were then coded to be used for chi square analysis. For correct gender pronouns, participants were marked if they used the appropriate gender pronoun ("*he/she*") (1), an incorrect pronoun (2), or used a gender neutral term ("*candidate*") (3). Attributions of traits were either gleaned from resume experience or answers to questions on the transcript. Comments were then coded for mentioning (1) or not mentioning (2) experience listed on the resume, such as references education or previous job experience since these were only mentioned in the resume. Comments were also coded for mentioning (1) or not mentioning (2) experience listed in the transcript, such as the content of the experienced brought up in the transcript.

Comments were then coded if they detected language and if the perception of language, either by references to language in particular or discussion of their presentation ("*Her answers were vague*", "*said probably a lot and wasn't sure of choices.*"). Comments consisted of noticing language and having a positive comment on it ("*He was quick to answer the questions in a concise manner*") (1), noticing language and having a negative comment on it ("*Her answers were somewhat flippant*") (2), or not mentioning language at all (3). Comments were further assessed to describe the degree to which the participant mentioned the prevalence of the traits as either having the traits (1), lacking the traits (2), or needing more information (3) (e.g. body language, tone, face-to-face interaction) The following percentages reflect the frequency of mentioning the themes by trait and language trail (See Tables 3, 4, and 6). In addition to these frequencies, several chi square analyses were conducted to see if these frequencies were significant. All tests used were corrected to be significant at $p = .005$ to reduce the chance of Type I error.

Perception of language. Participants did not notice powerful language as often as they noticed powerless language, suggesting the manipulation for powerful language was subtle while powerless language was not. While the frequency shows a difference in the perception of language, this is effect was present only in the questions referring to agentic traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) $= 27.24$, $p < .005$, $\Phi = .25$) but was not significant for communal traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) $= 4.024$, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .04$) (See Table 5).

There was no significant differences in the citation of resumes for agentic traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) $= 3.34$, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .03$) or for communal traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) $= 3.56$, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .03$). Also, there was not a significant difference in the frequency of citation of transcript material for agentic traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 88$) $= 5.34$, $p < .005$, $\Phi = .05$) than communal traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) =

4.00, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .04$) (See Table 3). The perception of agentic traits was also affected by the powerless language (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) = 25.32, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .24$) but not for communal traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) = 2.47, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .02$) (See Table 4).

When powerless language was noticed, it was often interpreted negatively for agentic traits χ^2 (1, $n = 41$) = 19.80, $p < .005$, $\Phi = .48$). However, participants did not note whether or not language had an impact on communal traits (χ^2 (1, $n = 6$) = .38, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .007$) (See Table 5).

Perception of gender. There was no significant difference in the frequency of noticing gender, as only 50% of participants noticed gender, χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) = 0. A chi square indicated there was no significant difference in the frequency for participants mentioning gender based on the language trial, χ^2 (1, $n = 106$) = 6.82, $p > .005$, $\Phi = .08$ (See Table 6).

Discussion

The current research examined how powerful and powerless language can influence the perception of gender roles. Role Contiguity Theory suggested that women using powerless language should be more liked than women using powerful language, implying that powerful language mimics agentic traits and powerless language mimics communal traits (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Phelan et al., 2008, Carli, 1990). Linguistic research would show how powerful and powerless language can be used to be persuasive. However, there is a division in the literature finding that sometimes gender would affect the interpretation of language and sometimes language would not be affected by the gender of the speaker (Reid et al, 2009). Specifically, women who used powerless language were sometime more persuasive than women who used powerful language but the effect was not always present. This study investigated whether

language could elicit gender roles in a high pressure situation, such as an interview, which could add to the literature as to why women are unable to obtain leadership roles.

However, the results indicated that there was no interaction between gender and language. Instead, there was a main effect for language. Those who used powerless language scored significantly lower on the competency index, hireability index, and agentic traits scale relative to those who used powerful language. Language, however, did not have an effect on social skills index or communal traits.

Effects of Language on Agency and Communality

Hypothesis one was partially supported as powerful language did result in perceptions of more agentic traits than communal traits, however powerless language did not result in the perception of more communal traits than agentic traits. Furthermore there was no effect of gender on these results. The overall effect of powerful and powerless language eliminated the effects of gender. Both indices and open ended responses indicated that powerless language had a significant impact on the perception of agentic traits. Research by Carli (1990) would have indicated that women should have been more persuasive and preferred when they used powerless language because it reflects their lower status. The impact of this difference was highlighted in the open response questions, as there were significant differences in the references to the transcript, the perception of powerless language as being negative, and the overall quality of traits.

The effects of language on the perception of the listed agentic traits (*assertive, confident, ambitious, dominant, independent*) were substantial. The largest effect size was present when present when they were asked to evaluate the agentic traits a participant had based on the language. The largest effect size was apparent in the negative or positive perception of language

when looking at agentic traits. However, it was only a moderate correlation. So while this study did not underline why powerless language resulted in lower scores, the effect was substantial and the participants noticed it.

Participant responses for communal traits items lacked any sort of difference between language trials. A potential cause of this could be that participants had a difficult time discerning the communal traits (*affection, helpful, kind, sympathetic,* and *nurturing*) from the provided transcript. This is apparent in the lack of different scoring from the powerful and powerless language trials. While the chi square analysis indicated there was no difference in the quality of communal traits between trials, several participants wanted more interpersonal information about the candidate that could not be given to them in written form. This aspect of communal traits was not considered for the construction of content material. The implications of these results are therefore limited since participants were unable to assess the listed communal traits.

As mentioned before, gender was not salient, therefore any effects gender would have on language perception were lost. The open ended responses from the current study indicated that when language was noticed, it was noticed more often for the powerless language condition than for the powerful language condition, which is supported by previous research (Hosman & Siltanen, 2006). While previous research would have supported that powerless language distracts the reader from the actual message, it still does not explain why powerless language did not lead to a higher perception of communality or a degree of variance in the perception of the traits (See Table 4) (Blankenship & Holtgraves, 2006; Reid et al., 2009).

The Lack of a Gender Interaction

The second part of the hypothesis targeted how women were perceived compared to men. The remainder of the hypothesis was not supported because there was no language by gender

interaction. Hypothesis two was not supported since men were not evaluated to be more competent or more hirable than women. Hypothesis three was also not supported as women who used powerless language were not perceived to be more sociable than women who used powerful language while men did not vary. As replicated, hypothesis four was not supported; therefore women who used powerful language did not receive higher scores on competency than women who used powerless language while men did not vary. Hypothesis five was not supported, there was no interaction between the competency and social skills ratings between, therefore indicated that the backlash effect was not present. However, when analyzing this hypothesis, men's overall scores showed that they had higher competency than social skills regardless of language used. So while the backlash effect was not found when evaluated women, participants still rated the male candidates with stereotypical roles. It is interesting, however, that women candidates were not given higher scores on social skills to mimic this trend.

There could be several reasons why gender did not affect the competency index, hireability index, or perception of agentic traits. First and foremost, gender was not salient in the current study since gender was only referenced as a name on the resume and only 50% of the participants used the correct gender pronoun. Previous studies which used the interview paradigm used a video to deliver the transcript, thus making gender visible and salient rather than relying on a written transcript. Participants did not notice gender more often in either the powerful language trials or powerless language trails, suggesting that these language styles are not typed for specific gender use. While gender may not have been noticed, it still could have had unnoticeable effects on evaluations in the current study.

On the other hand, previous research used a job description with more agentic qualities, meaning it used a traditional upper management job description that required agentic traits in

order to be successful in the job (Phelan et al., 2008). In the present study, gender neutral description was used as it contained three agentic qualities and three communal qualities. In addition, the transcript also addressed three agentic traits and three communal traits, therefore not biasing participants to select a participant based on gender stereotypes.

While the current research expected to find a gender by language interaction, meaning women who used powerless language should have received higher scores on the social skills index than women who used powerful language and that their competency index ratings would have been less than men, the lack therefore indicates a shift in gender role qualifications. When gender is not salient, focus is placed more on work experience and language, leading to evaluations that are similar for both genders (Reid et al., 2009). Implications of this study are limited since a written transcript was used. While the candidates who used powerless language had lower scores on the competency index and hirability index, the effect for this was marginal, attributing to less than 10% of the variability in the scores.

Limitations

There are several important limitations to report for the current study. First, attrition rates were exceptionally high. Of the 165 participants who agreed to complete the study, only 108 completed the actual survey. It is possible that participants completed the informed consent in a separate Qualtric survey and then were redirected to the actual survey. This transition could have been blocked or participants could have been concerned the survey was redirecting them to spam of some sort. This design was implemented to keep identifying information - particularly those who were recruited from introductory psychology students- separate from the actual results. The informed consent also filtered out those who did not consent to take the study and those who were under the age of 18. A redesign of this would have informed the participant that a

redirection would occur and if they experienced issue to contact the principal investigator. Even though attrition rates were large, few participants were excluded from data analysis.

The sample used could have had an effect on the results. Participants who took the survey were not those who would normally make hiring decisions. While there were a variety of participants who took the study, job qualifications were not assessed, therefore results from this study are limited to colloquial interactions. Another limitation that comes from this diverse sample was differences on the social skills index. Participants recruited from the three pools rated social skills differently, therefore the results from the study could have been different if participants rated social skills the same. The sample also lacked diversity, with the majority of the participants being white females.

Future Research

An adaptation of the written transcript to either a video or audio recording could be used to make gender and possibly communal traits salient. This change could highlight if there is or is not a gender by language interaction and could change the lack of difference on communal traits. Another avenue of research could investigate the cultural effects of language. Particularly, if the individualistic-collectivistic culture spectrum could have an effect on the interpretation of powerless language. Of the comments received in the open ended responses, the powerless responses did not have the polite response as seen in the literature. Those who perceived powerless language as lacking competence could possibly hold more individualistic values. On the other hand, those who hold collective values strong might see the powerless markers as a part of polite language rather than a person lacking in competency.

Future research should also seek participants who are hiring managers or who conduct interviews for organizations. These individuals have a greater understanding of the decisions

they make for an organization. Pressures of business success or labor law considerations likely had little effect on the participants' mind in this study. This is an important consideration because these pressures could affect how gender roles and language affect a person's likelihood of being hired for a job. Is it fair to discriminate against those who use polite forms of language even though they possess the skills needed to be successful at the job? Understanding how these decisions are made can contribute to the growing literature as to why the glass ceiling prevents women from advancing their careers.

References

Ball State University (2014). *Job Descriptions.* Retrieved from http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/housing/employment/professionalandgrads/halldirectors/descriptions

Baxter, J. (2012). Women of the corporation: A sociolinguistic perspective of senior women's leadership language in the U.K. *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 16*(1), 81-107.

Blankenship, K., & Holtgraves, T. (2013). The role of different markers of linguistic powerlessness and persuasion. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 22*(10), 1-22. doi:10.1177/0261927X04273034

Carli, L. L. (1990). Gender, language, and influence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59*(5), 941-951. doi:0022-3514/90/$00.75

Christie, C. (2007). Relevance theory and politeness. *Journal of Politeness Research, 3*(2), 269-294.

Edwards, J. (2013). Language and gender. *Sociolinguistics: A very short introduction* (pp. 105-113). Great Britain: Oxford University Press.

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review, 109*(3), 573-598. doi: 10.1037//0033-295X.109.3.573.

Gorman, E. H. (2005). Gender stereotypes, same-gender preferences, and organizational variation in the hiring of women: Evidence from law firms. *American Sociological Review, 70*(4), pp. 702-728.

Harris, S. (2003). Politeness and power: Making and responding to 'requests' in institutional settings. *Text: Transactions of the Society for Textual Scholarship, 23*(1), 27-52.

Mills, S. (2012). *Gender matters : Feminist linguistic analysis*. London: Equinox.

Holtgraves, T., & Lasky, B. (1999). Linguistic power and persuasion. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 18*(2), 196-205.

Hosman, L. A., & Siltanen, S. A. (2006). Powerful and powerless language forms: Their consequences for impression formation, attribution control of self and control of others, cognitive responses, and message memory. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 25*(1), 33-46.

Kendall, S., & Tannen, D. (1997). Gender and language in the workplace. In R. Wodak (Ed.), *Gender and discourse* (pp. 81-105) Sage Publishers.

Mdoudjeke, J. G. (2010). Linguistic politeness in job applications in Cameroon. *Journal of Pragmatics, 42*, 2530. doi:10.1016/j.pragma.2010.02.010

Mullany, L. (2004). Gender, politeness and institutional power roles: Humour as a tactic to gain compliance in workplace business meetings. *Multilingua, 23*(1), 13-37.

Mullany, L. (2006). "Girls on tour": Politeness, small talk, and gender in managerial business meetings". *Journal of Politeness Research, 2*(1), 77.

Ng, S. H., & Bradac, J. J. (1993). *Power in language: Verbal communications and social influences*. United States of America: Sage Publications, Inc.

Okimoto, T. G., & Brescoll, V. L. (2010). The price of power: Power seeking and backlash against female politicians. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 36*(7), 923-936. doi: 10.1177/0146167210371949

O*Net Online. (2011). *Summary report for resident advisors.* Retrieved from http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/39-9041.00

Phelan, J. E., Moss-Racusin, C. A., & Rudman, L. A. (2008). Competent yet out in the cold: Shifting criteria for hiring reflect backlash toward agentic women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 32*, 406-413. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2008.00454.x.

Reid, S. A., Palomares, N. A., Anderson, G. L., & Bondad-Brown, B. (2009). Gender, language, and social influence: A test of expectation states, role congruity, and self-categorization theories. *Human Communication Research, 35*(4), 465-490.

Rudman, L. A, (1998). Self-promotion as a risk factor for women: the cost and benefits of counterstereotyical impression management, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*(3), 629-645. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.74.3.629.

Rudman, L. A., & Glick, P. (2001). Prescriptive gender stereotypes and backlash towards agentic women. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(4), 743-762.

Schlund, K. (2014). On form and function of politeness formulae. *Journal of Politeness Research, 10*(2), 296. doi:10.1515/pr-2014-0012.

Takano, S. (2005). Re-examining linguistic power: Strategic uses of directives by professional Japanese women in positions of authority and leadership. *Journal of Pragmatics, 37*(5), 633-666.

University of Michigan (2014). *Live-In Hall Director Position Description.* Retrieved from http://www.housing.umich.edu/residence-education/hall-director-position-description

Appendix A

Job Description

Resident Hall Directors coordinate activities in the residential halls. They are responsible for ordering supplies and determining needs for maintenance, repairs, and furnishings. They coordinate housing records and room assignments. They may assist residents and resident assistants with problem solving or refer them to counseling resources.

- Enforce rules and regulations to ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the resident halls.
- Provide emergency first aid and summon medical assistance when necessary
- Mediate interpersonal problems between residents
- Communicate with other staff to resolve problems with individual students
- Counsel students in the handling of issues such as family, financial, and educational problems.
- Develop and coordinate educational programs for residents.

Benefits Include:

- Two-bedroom furnished apartments
- All utilities paid (including cable and internet)
- Meal plan for when classes are in session
- Parking pass
- Medical, dental, and vision insurance
- Tuition reimbursement

Starting salary

$30,000- in addition to benefits

Appendix B

Male Resume

Joseph Carmichael

7531 N. Main Street • Indianapolis, IN 46124 • (317) 345-6578

Education

Ball State University

MA College Student Affairs, May 2013 GPA: 3.9/4.0

BS Psychology, May 2010, GPA 3.8/4.0

Work Experience

- Assistant Resident Hall Director August 2012-May 2013
    - Responsible for maintaining the scheduled duty rotation
    - Responsible for advising and supplying meditation for academic, personal, and social issues.
    - Responsible for working as a staff in administrating and developing hall and other community programs to meet the needs of student.
    - Organized housing upkeep and maintenance.
- Resident Assistant, August 2008-May 2010
    - Created bulletin board to inform students of campus resources
    - Regularly attended staff meetings
    - Conducted floor meetings to create a living-learning community
    - Participated in diversity training and program creation.

Leadership Experience

- Secretary of Spectrum, August 2009-2010

- Assistant with meeting organization and note taking
- Assisted with event organization
- Made class presentation about the LGBT information.

Female Resume

Jessica Carmichael

7531 N. Main Street • Indianapolis, IN 46124 • (317) 345-6578

Education

Ball State University

MA College Student Affairs, May 2013 GPA: 3.9/4.0

BS Psychology, May 2010, GPA 3.8/4.0

Work Experience

- Assistant Resident Hall Director August 2012-May 2013
    - Responsible for maintaining the scheduled duty rotation
    - Responsible for advising and supplying meditation for academic, personal, and social issues.
    - Responsible for working as a staff in administrating and developing hall and other community programs to meet the needs of student.
    - Organized housing upkeep and maintenance.
- Resident Assistant, August 2008-May 2010
    - Created bulletin board to inform students of campus resources
    - Regularly attended staff meetings
    - Conducted floor meetings to create a living-learning community
    - Participated in diversity training and program creation.

Leadership Experience

- Secretary of Spectrum, August 2009-2010
    - Assistant with meeting organization and note taking

- Assisted with event organization
- Made class presentation about the LGBT information.

Appendix C

Powerful Transcript

Interviewer: What skills make you qualified for the job?

Candidate: I have earned a Master's Degree in Higher Education and Student Programs. As part of this program I participated in an assistantship in which I was an Assistant Resident Hall Director. I was able to balance both my class work and hall work. I enforced the university's housing and resident life policies, organized weekly meetings with RAs to assess their work with students, and gave them recommendations for improvement.

Interviewer: Describe how you monitor RA's work with students.

Candidate: First, I would hold weekly meetings with RAs and ask them about their interactions with the students and how they are helping students achieve their academic goals within the resident halls. Furthermore, I would communicate with the residents on the RA's floor to see how they perceive the RA's events and availability to the students.

Interviewer: How would you handle a Resident Assistant who was caught drinking in the resident halls?

Candidate: An RA who is caught drinking in the resident hall is not acting as an appropriate role model for other students. Although this could be a one-time incident, it needs to be handled seriously. The RA should be given a warning if it is his or her first time and if any other issues arise he or she should be terminated.

Interviewer: How would you create a strong living learning community within the halls, specifically for nursing students?

Candidate: I would spend time with the residents and see what their needs are. I would also rely on my RAs to monitor student progress and encourage struggling students to seek help from campus resources. Furthermore, I would make sure the resident hall events are specialized to the community's needs.

Interviewer: You are awakened in the middle of your sleep by a resident who is pounding on your door because she is having severe abdominal pain. How do you handle the situation?

Candidate: I would first assess the situation to see if this is an emergency crisis. If I believed that the symptoms are more than an upset stomach, I would contact 911 and make sure the student is taken to the hospital.

Interviewer: How would you handle a conflict between roommates?

Candidate: It is important to address the needs of the students. Conflict is inevitable between residents and procedures should be set in place to deal with these issues. I would first have an RA handle the situation to the best of his or her ability before stepping in and getting to the bottom of the conflict. It could be a misunderstanding, or it could be two people who are unable to live together despite time put into creating a solution. An outside opinion may give insight for the students to better understand the cause of conflict.

Polite Transcript

Interviewer: What skills make you qualified for the job?

Candidate: I have earned a Master's Degree in Higher Education and Student Programs. As part of this program I participated in an assistantship in which I was an Assistant Resident Hall Director. I was able to …hmm… balance both my class work and hall work. I enforced the university's housing and resident life policies, organized weekly meetings with RAs to assess their work with students, and gave them recommendations for improvement.

Interviewer: Describe how you monitor RA's work with students.

Candidate: First, I would hold weekly meetings with RAs and kinda ask them about their interactions with the students and how they are helping students achieve their academic goals within the resident halls. … Furthermore, I think I would communicate with the residents on the RA's floor to see how they perceive the RA's events and availability to the students.

Interviewer: How would you handle a Resident Assistant who was caught drinking in the resident halls?

Candidate: An RA who is caught drinking in the resident hall is not acting as an appropriate role model for other students. Although this could be a onetime incident, it probably needs to be handled seriously. Most likely the RA should be given a warning if it is his or her first time and if any other issues arise he or she should be terminated.

Interviewer: How would you create a strong living learning community within the halls, specifically for nursing students?

Candidate: I guess I would spend time with the residents and see what their needs are. I probably would also rely on my RAs to monitor student progress and encourage struggling students to seek help from campus resources. Furthermore, I would make sure the resident hall events are specialized to the community's needs.

Interviewer: You are awakened in the middle of your sleep by a resident who is pounding on your door because she is having severe abdominal pain. How do you handle the situation?

Candidate: Hmmm… I would first assess the situation to see if this is an emergency crisis. If I believed that the symptoms are more than an upset stomach, I would probably contact 911 and make sure the student is taken to the hospital.

Interviewer: How would you handle a conflict between roommates?

Candidate: It seems to me it is important to address the needs of the students. Conflict is inevitable between residents and procedures should be set in place to deal with these issues. I would first have an RA handle the situation to the best of his or her ability before stepping in and getting to the bottom of the conflict. It could be a misunderstanding … or perhaps it could be two people who are unable to live together despite time put into creating a solution. An outside opinion may give insight for the students to better understand the cause of conflict.

Appendix D

Survey

Items will be entered into a Qualtrics survey. The following is a template of the questions that were asked.

1	Age at last birthday: _____
2	Please indicate your level of education
	O Some High School
	O High School Diploma/GED
	O Associate Degree
	O Some College-Freshman
	O Some College-Sophomore
	O Some College- Junior
	O Some College- Senior
	O Bachelors of Science or Arts
	O Technical Schooling
	O Master's Degree
	O PhD or equivalent
3	Please indicate your race
	O- White
	O- Hispanic/Latino
	O- Black/African American
	O- Native

	American/American Indian
	O- Asian/Pacific Islander
	O- Other
4	Please indicate your gender
	O Female
	O Male
	O Other

Indicate how much you agree or disagree that the candidate fulfills these qualifications. *(Will have each item appear individually in Qualtrics)*

			SD	D	N	A	SA
Competence Index	1	The candidate strikes you as competent.	O	O	O	O	O
	2	The candidate has significant technical skills for this job.	O	O	O	O	O
	3	You characterize the candidate as someone likely to get ahead in their career.	O	O	O	O	O
Social Skills Index	4	You characterize this candidate as someone you want to get to know better.	O	O	O	O	O
	5	Do you agree that the candidate is willing to listen and support others in this job?	O	O	O	O	O
	6	The candidate strikes you as likeable.	O	O	O	O	O
	7	Residents would feel comfortable seeking help from the candidate.	O	O	O	O	O

Hirability Index	8	You would choose to interview the candidate for the job.	O	O	O	O	O
	9	The candidate will be hired for the job.	O	O	O	O	O
	10	You would hire the candidate.	O	O	O	O	O
			SD	D	N	A	SA
Agentic Traits	11	Assertive	O	O	O	O	O
	12	Confident	O	O	O	O	O
	13	Ambitious	O	O	O	O	O
	14	Dominant	O	O	O	O	O
	15	Independent	O	O	O	O	O
	16	Please explain why you think this candidate represents these traits?	*Open Response*				
Communal Traits	17	Affection	O	O	O	O	O
	18	Helpful	O	O	O	O	O
	19	Kind	O	O	O	O	O
	20	Sympathetic	O	O	O	O	O
	21	Nurturing	O	O	O	O	O
	22	Please explain why you think this candidate represents these traits?	*Open Response*				

Appendix E

Social Media Request for Participants

Hello! Please take 20 minutes out of your day to complete a survey for my undergraduate thesis. You will be evaluating the qualifications of job applicants based on an excerpt from the interview. Thank you for your time and participation!

(Link to survey on Qualtric)

Appendix F

Language Use in the Interview Setting

In this study you will be asked to evaluate a job candidate's interview technique. You will review a job description, resume, and selections from a transcript. Then you will assess how the candidate presented themselves to help them improve for future applications.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you must be at least 18 years of age.

The study will take between 20 and 30 minutes and you will receive .5 research credit if you are a student enrolled in PSYS 100 at Ball State University.

There are no foreseeable risks or benefits from participating in this study.

Data will be stored on the researcher's password-protected computer for one year and then deleted.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and your responses are anonymous. You may decide to not participate in this study at any time without prejudice from the investigator. If you decide to not finish the study, you will still be given research credit if applicable.

For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Office of Research Integrity, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070, irb@bsu.edu. For questions about this research, you may contact the principle investigator; her contact information is provided below:

Hanna Hlebasko

Department of Psychological Sciences

Ball State University

hhlebasko@bsu.edu

Thomas Holtgraves

Department of Psychological Sciences

Ball State University

00t0holtgrav@bsu.edu

Appendix G

Study Description

You will be giving feedback to interviewees for a Resident Hall Director position. The candidate is looking for ways to improve presentation during the interview. You will read the job description, resume, and interview transcript excerpts for the candidate in question. Once completed, you will then fill out a survey assessing their responses and provide written feedback on several important questions regarding hireability presentation.

Appendix H

Debriefing

You were evaluating candidate hirability, social skills, and competences based on the type of language used in the study. You either read a script using powerful (direct) or powerless (indirect) language; then asked to see if the candidate had more agentic or communal traits. Furthermore, candidates varied on gender. Female candidates should have elicited more communal traits and males should have elicited more agentic traits. However, language used should have brought out agentic or communal trait.

If you are taking this for research credit, you will receive a half hour credit and it will appear in the SONA system within 24 hours. If this does not happen, please contact the principle investigator. Thank you for your time.

Hanna Hlebasko

Department of Psychological Sciences

Ball State University

hhlebasko@bsu.edu

Thomas Holtgraves

Department of Psychological Sciences

Ball State University

00t0holtgrav@bsu.edu

Appendix I

Table 1

Mix Model ANOVA on Language, Gender, and Agency

	Powerful Language			Powerless Language		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agentic Traits*	3.81(.57)	3.74(.61)	3.78(.59)	3.12(.80)	3.00(.87)	3.06(.83)
Communal Traits	3.42(.57)	3.59(.60)	3.50(.59)	3.41(.62)	3.41(.79)	3.41(.71)

*Note: * indicates a significant Language X Agency interaction at* $p < .05$

Table 2

Factorial ANOVA on Language, Gender, and Indices

	Powerful Language			Powerless Language		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Competency*	4.17(.59)	4.21(.62)	4.19 (.60)	3.97(.55)	3.63(1.028)	3.80(.84)
Social Skills	3.81(.56)	3.87(.60)	3.84(.57)	3.68(.70)	3.59(.89)	3.63(.79)
Hirability*	3.98(.67)	4.02(.64)	4.00(.65)	3.54(.88)	3.44(.96)	3.49(.91)

*Note: *indicates a significant main effect for language at* $p < .05$

Table 3

Open Response Comment Analysis: Source of Traits

	Resume		Experience		Language*	
	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language
Agentic Traits	14.15%	9.43%	33.02%	17.92%	8.49%	30.19%
Communal Traits	8.49%	7.55%	27.36%	20.75%	0.94%	2.83%

*Note: *indicates a significant $\chi 2$ for agentic traits at $p < .005$.*

Table 4

Open Response Comment Analysis: Quality of Having Traits

	Has Traits		Lacked Traits		Needed More Information	
	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language
Agentic Traits	34.91%	23.58%	1.89%	17.92%	4.72%	0.00%
Communal Traits	23.58%	22.64%	5.66%	8.49%	10.38%	5.66%

*Note: *indicates a significant $\chi 2$ for agentic traits at $p < .005$.*

Table 5

Open Response Comment Analysis: Perception of Language if Noticed

	Language Noticed		Language Noticed and was Positive*		Language Noticed and was Negative*	
	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language	Powerful Language	Powerless Language
Agentic Traits	8.49%	30.19%	7.55%	11.32%	0.94%	26.42%
Communal Traits	0.94%	2.83%	0.00%	0.00%	0.94%	2.83%

*Note: *indicates a significant $\chi 2$ for agentic traits at $p < .005$.*

Table 6

χ2 Mentioned Correct Gender in Open Response

	Correct	Neutral	N/A	*n**
Powerful Language	22	22	13	57
Powerless Language	31	14	4	49

*Note: * Adjusted for one incorrect response. Their response was recorded into not reporting gender.*

Appendix J

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
2000 University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306-0155
Phone: 765-285-5070

DATE:	December 19, 2014
TO:	Hanna Hlebasko
FROM:	Ball State University IRB
RE:	IRB protocol # 695175-1
TITLE:	Language Use in the Interview Setting
SUBMISSION TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
DECISION DATE:	December 19, 2014
REVIEW TYPE:	**EXEMPT**

The Institutional Review Board reviewed your protocol on December 19, 2014 and has determined the procedures you have proposed are appropriate for exemption under the federal regulations. As such, there will be no further review of your protocol, and you are cleared to proceed with the procedures outlined in your protocol. As an exempt study, there is no requirement for continuing review. Your protocol will remain on file with the IRB as a matter of record.

Exempt Categories:

	Category 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educations practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
X	**Category 2:** Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior
	Category 3: Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) Federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
	Category 4: Research involving the collection of study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

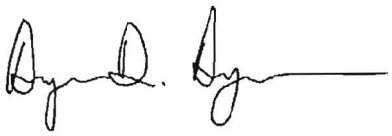
	Category 5: Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of Department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under these programs.
	Category 6: Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed which contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

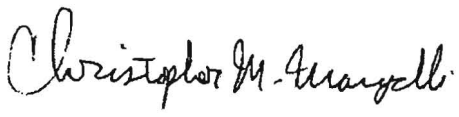
Editorial Notes:

1. Approved- Exempt

While your project does not require continuing review, it is the responsibility of the P.I. (and, if applicable, faculty supervisor) to inform the IRB if the procedures presented in this protocol are to be modified or if problems related to human research participants arise in connection with this project. **Any procedural modifications must be evaluated by the IRB before being implemented, as some modifications may change the review status of this project.** Please contact (ORI Staff) if you are unsure whether your proposed modification requires review or have any questions. Proposed modifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRB (http://www.bsu.edu/irb) for review. Please reference the above IRB protocol number in any communication to the IRB regarding this project.

Reminder: Even though your study is exempt from the relevant federal regulations of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46, subpart A), you and your research team are not exempt from ethical research practices and should therefore employ all protections for your participants and their data which are appropriate to your project.





Bryan Byers, PhD/Chair
Institutional Review Board

Christopher Mangelli, JD, MS, MEd, CIP/Director
Office of Research Integrity